

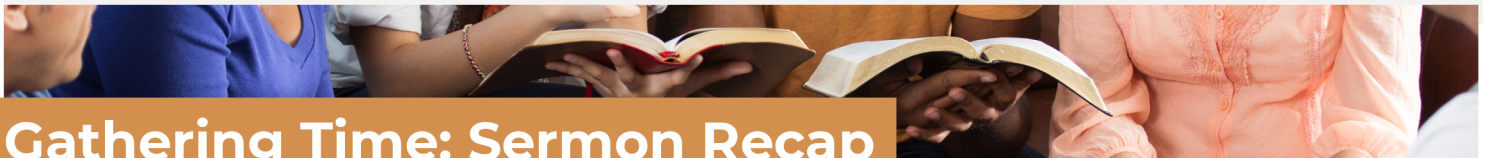
## How to Use This Guide:

- **Read the Sermon Recap** by yourself (for devotions) or with your group. You can also watch the sermon on YouTube @CBCFamily.
- **Read the passage/s.** Look for truths, promises, and/or commands. Try to find the “who, what, when, where, why, and how.”
- **Group Time:** First, take turns reading the Scripture passage/s from the sermon, round-robin style, letting each person read one verse. Go around the circle until the whole passage has been read. Then, **utilize the Group Time** portion of this 4G Guide.

### What's a 4G? A guide that covers:

1. Gathering Time (Sunday morning)
2. Group Time (for group meetings)
3. God Times (personal and family devotions)
4. Give Time (a prompt for reflection)

- **Personal God Time:** Use these each day to dive into the passages further and challenge yourself to apply the texts.
- **Family God Time:** Use these each week to dive into the passages with your family.
- **Give Time:** Ask your group, yourself, or your family what might be a good response to the sermon or text? How are you inspired to give of your time, talent, or treasure?



## Gathering Time: Sermon Recap

### What Is a Baptist?

This week, Greg Hoffman explored what it means to be a Baptist. He looked at **Mark 12:13-17; Romans 13:1-2; Acts 5:17-31; Romans 12:1; Galatians 1:6-9 and 5:1-9; and 2 Timothy 3:16.**

Greg picked up where Bishop left off, going over two more Baptist distinctives. (As a reminder, the distinctives are: Biblical authority, autonomy of the local church, priesthood of Believers, the two ordinances of baptism and communion, individual soul liberty, saved and baptized church membership, the two offices of pastor and deacon, and separation of church and state.) Today, Greg looked at the separation of church and state and individual soul liberty.

It may sound like a history class when we say that Baptists believe in the separation of church and state. What we mean is that we believe the government does not have the right to interfere with the church or worship. We believe that the church, under Christ's headship, is outside government control.

Yet, God's Word tells us to be good citizens. Since our governmental authorities have been placed over us by God to fulfill His ultimate will, we submit to them. (The exception is if they contradict God. See Acts 5:17-31.)

Secondly, we must remember that we worship God, not our government. While we practice good citizenship, we remember that we are God's citizens first (Rom 12:1, Php 3:20). We trust Him to save, protect, and provide for us. He alone is worthy of our worship.

Baptists also believe in individual soul liberty. This means that the individual soul answers to God and God alone. No person, no church, no government authority, nor anything else controls us in matters of faith. (Gal 1:6-9, 5:1-9)

What does all of this mean for us? No one can tell us what to do (in matters of the faith), nor can we tell others what to do. We are each responsible for our own faith, answering to God alone. So, are you submitting to Him?

# Group Time: Questions

## Conversation Starter

Ask: Do you think most Americans like being told what to do? Is Texas better or worse about this?

## Discussion Questions

Choose a track, mix and match, or do them all.

- **Track 1:** After hearing the Sermon Recap and reading the verses, how would you sum up the two beliefs Greg talked about?
- Why do you think people struggle with submitting to our authorities? In some parts of the world, governments what to control churches. Why might this be?
- What biblical support would you cite to uphold the Baptist view on both these distinctives?

- **Track 2:** Read Gal 5:1-9. How do these verses add to the discussion of individual soul liberty?
- Some people prefer any system of belief that has tight rules, laws, or practices. Why?
- Christianity is based on grace. How are individual soul liberty and grace connected?

- **Track 3:** Have you ever seen or struggled with "country idolatry"? (I.e., putting one's country above God.) What's the antidote to this problem?
- How important are these two distinctives? How should/can your beliefs about them show in your actions?



## God Time: Personal

Use the sermon notes from our Gathering Time this week for your personal time with God. Use a spare notebook or your favorite device to journal your responses. Include prayer and application in your time with God!

- **Monday:** Read Mark 12:13-17. What stands out to you? Mark your Bible or journal about it.
- **Tuesday:** Read Rom 13:1-7. What stands out to you? Mark your Bible or journal about it.
- **Wednesday:** Read Acts 5:25-32. What stands out to you? What reason did the apostles give for not obeying the priestly council?
- **Thursday:** Review Acts 5:25-32. God wants us to be obedient citizens. Under what condition can Believers disobey? Have you seen this in history?
- **Friday:** Read Gal 5:1-9. The gospel is freeing! We each answer individually to God; only God is the controlling authority in matters of faith. Praise God for this.



## God Time: Family

Parents: Familiarize yourself with sermon recap from our Gathering Time. Sum it up in a way your child can understand.

- Consider **reading** about the Good Samaritan in Luke 10:25-37. Being a good citizen is an extension of being a good neighbor.
- Give a **summary** statement like: "At our church, we believe things about God, the Bible, or the way we worship together based on what the Bible teaches. The Bible teaches us to be good citizens and to respect our authorities. It also teaches us that every person answers directly to God for they think and do."
- **Ask:** How can we be good neighbors?
- **Say:** When we are good neighbors and citizens, we please God and bless others.
- **Activity:** Talk about ways that your family could be (or already are) good neighbors and citizens. See if you can come up with additional ways to bless others.

**Give:** *How does this week's sermon inspire you to give of your time, talent, or treasure?*

**Demonstrate. Declare. Disciple.**

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